



Human Rights: Green Beret Cut from Army for Intervening on Behalf of Child Assault Victim in Afghanistan Green Beret Cut for Intervening...?

By Jay Sekulow October 9, 2015

A soldier in the war on terror – a hero – is facing discharge from the U.S. Armed Forces for intervening to save the life of a young child from abhorrent sexual abuse in Afghanistan. It should shock our conscience as a nation.

Sergeant First Class (SFC) Charles Martland is the Green Beret being separated involuntarily from the U.S. Army in connection with the alleged beating of an Afghan militia leader aiding the US operations against the Taliban. The other U.S. soldier involved in the incident, former Captain (CPT) Daniel Quinn separated voluntarily. According to reports, SFC Martland and CPT Quinn confronted the local militia leader after receiving reports that he had repeatedly raped a 12-year-old boy over a span of two weeks and, then, had the boy's mother beaten.

According to CNN, SFC Martland is under a Pentagon-imposed gag order, but at the request of Rep. Duncan Hunter, R-Calif, he wrote a statement detailing his actions on Sept. 6, 2011. "Our ALP (Afghan Local Police) were committing atrocities and we were quickly losing the support of the local populace," he wrote to Rep. Hunter. "The severity of the rapes and the lack of action by the Afghan Government caused many of the locals to view our ALP as worse than the Taliban."

As reported by Fox News and countless other news agencies, SFC Martland and CPT Quinn learned that the boy had been tied to a post at the home of ALP commander, Abdul Rahman, and raped repeatedly for up to two weeks. His mother was beaten when she attempted to intervene. The boy showed the Green Berets his arms where the scars from being tied remained. A medic took the boy to a back room for an examination with an interpreter. Quinn verified the story with other nearby ALP commanders.

"After the child rapist laughed it off and referenced that it was only a boy," CPT Quinn and SFC Martland took action, physically removing the Afghan commander from the U.S. military camp. According to SFC Martland, "He was never knocked out, and he ran away from our camp." He reiterated that the incident lasted no more than five minutes. SFC Martland stated that in response to this horrendous child sexual abuse: "We felt a moral obligation to act." Yet, for his actions, he was immediately pulled from the battlefield and is now facing an involuntary discharge from the military. SFC Martland's situation has received national attention following the September 21, 2015, New York Times report. The report outlined allegations that U.S. ground troops were being ordered to ignore the sexual abuse of children at the hands of "friendly" Afghan militia leaders.

One young Marine, Lance Corporal (LCpl) Gregory Buckley Jr. told his father that, from his bunk, he could hear Afghan police officers sexually abusing boys they had brought to the base. "At night we can

hear them screaming, but we're not allowed to do anything about it." Sickeningly, it appears that U.S. commanders permit ALP commanders to bring their "harem" of young children to stay with them on the base. Sadly, just days later, LCpl Buckley was shot to death on the base by one of the boys accompanying an ALP commander.

The silver lining in this situation is that SFC Martland's punishment has drawn the spotlight to these disgusting and unbelievable facts. SFC Martland was disciplined at the hands of the Army's Qualitative Management Program ("QMP"). An Army spokesman told The Blaze that the QMP review board is an "administrative procedure" and said he could "not confirm the specifics of Martland's separation due to privacy reasons."

According to a 2012 military memo, the Army's QMP considers the promotion potential of non-commissioned officers (NCOs) whose "performance, conduct and/or potential for advancement may not meet Army standards." According to the memo, NCOs exhibiting substandard performance, conduct or potential can then be denied continued service.

Apparently, the Army QMP has concluded that intervention by a Bronze Star recipient in order to stop the repeated rape of a child conflicts with "Army standards." If the purpose of QMP truly is to "enhance the quality of the career enlisted force," SFC Martland's actions should be commended not condemned. Instead, he has been determined unfit for military service and ordered to be expelled from the military.

According to Military.com, SFC Martland "appealed" the QMP decision. However, the memo to SFC Martland said his appeal was rejected because appeals can only be considered for "cases with material error, newly discovered evidence" or removal of certain documents. According to the memo, the office's decision is "final," but SFC Martland could still appeal to the Army Board for Correction of Military Records.

SFC Martland was set to be separated effective November 1, 2015. However, Army Secretary John McHugh has delayed SFC Martland's separation by 60 days, "to allow him to file an appeal with the Army Board for the Correction of Military Records." This delay is certainly not a permanent fix.

This situation reeks of injustice and hypocrisy. As SFC Martland declared: "Kicking me out of the army is morally wrong and the entire country knows it." If you agree with SFC Martland, now is the time to speak up on his behalf. Representative Duncan Hunter (R-CA) and Representative Vern Buchanan (R-FL) have introduced a resolution calling for SFC Martland's reinstatement. Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-TX) chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, has also intervened. These Representatives are taking action on these issues. Will you do the right thing, support a soldier who has acted honorably in every respect, and add your voice to the growing chorus seeking to right this obvious wrong?

At the ACLJ, we're looking into the matter and developing a legal strategy in the wake of this blatant injustice. We're preparing to send a critical legal letter to the Secretary of Defense to expose this situation and call for this Green Beret war hero's reinstatement.

No American Service Member should be stripped of their honor for doing what is right – for protecting a defenseless child from sexual abuse. It is time for this case to be reconsidered and for the military to reassess any orders and regulations that would allow this type of human rights atrocity to occur on our bases and under our willful protection.